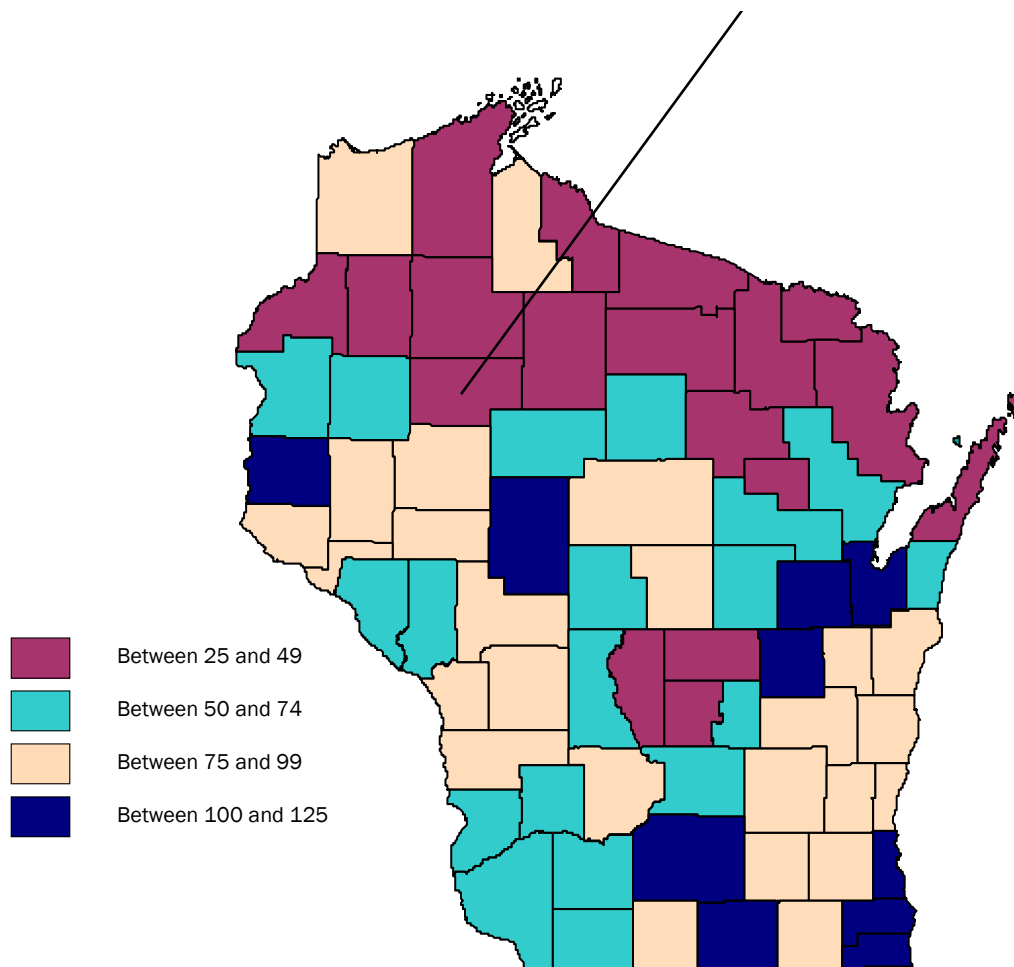


Rusk County Workforce Profile



The number of residents aged 25-29 years for every
100 residents aged 60-64 years in year 2025



Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, Demographic Services Center and the U.S. Bureau of Census.

For comparison, it is projected that there will be 90 residents aged 25-29 for every 100 residents aged 60-64 in Wisconsin in 2025. Nationally, it is projected that there will be 101 residents aged 25-29 for every 100 residents aged 60-64. In 2003, Wisconsin had 146 residents aged 25-29 for every 100 aged 60-64.



County Population

The population in Rusk County increased from Census 2000 to January 2004 but at a slower pace than in the nation and Wisconsin and ranked 65th fastest growing among the state's 72 counties. From 2000 to 2004 the population in Rusk County increased 1.1 percent by adding 165 residents. Twenty-three of the county's 33 municipalities added residents during the period but the loss of 172 residents from the City of Ladysmith, which coincides with

Total Population

	April 2000 Census	Jan. 1, 2004 estimate	Numeric change	Percent change
United States	281,421,906	292,287,454	10,865,548	3.9%
Wisconsin	5,363,715	5,532,955	169,240	3.2%
Rusk County	15,347	15,512	165	1.1%
Largest Municipalities				
Ladysmith, City	3,932	3,760	-172	-4.4%
Flambeau, Town	1,067	1,104	37	3.5%
Thornapple, Town	811	826	15	1.8%
Grant, Town	767	787	20	2.6%
Bruce, Village	787	785	-2	-0.3%
Marshall, Town	683	703	20	2.9%
Atlanta, Town	627	654	27	4.3%
Stubbs, Town	587	614	27	4.6%
Willard, Town	539	586	47	8.7%
Dewey, Town	523	554	31	5.9%

Source: Wis. Dept. of Administration, Demographic Services and U. S. Census Bureau

the closing of Mount Senario College, cancelled much of that increase. Eight of the ten largest municipalities out-paced the percent increase of the county. Even with the additional residents Rusk County has fewer residents per square mile than most counties in the state. With a population density of just 17 residents per square mile, it ranks 9th least densely populated county in the state where the average is 102 residents/sq. mile.

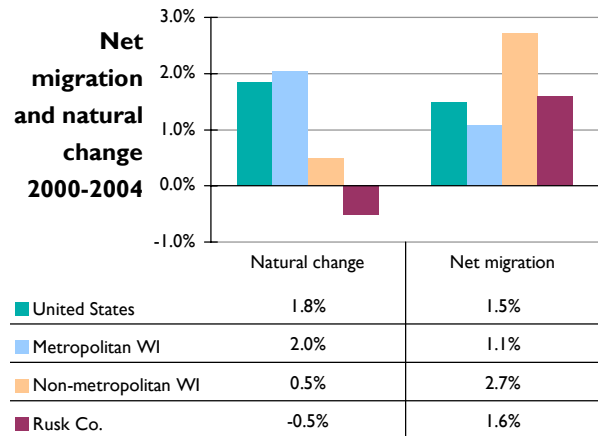
The population increase is attributed to net migration, more people moving to the county than leaving the county, since there was no increase in population from natural changes. In fact, deaths out-numbered births by 81. The county gained 245 residents from migration from 2000 to 2004 and the migration rate of 1.6 percent matched the state rate and exceeded the national rate.

Many of the residents who moved to the county in the last four years are older and most are past the child-bearing years. Although there were 616 births in the county from 2000 to

2004 the fertility rate (see glossary) of 57.8 is slightly lower than the 58.7 rate in Wisconsin and reflects the greater share of residents over 40 years old. In fact, the average age of residents in 2000 was 40 years which will increase to 47 years by 2030.

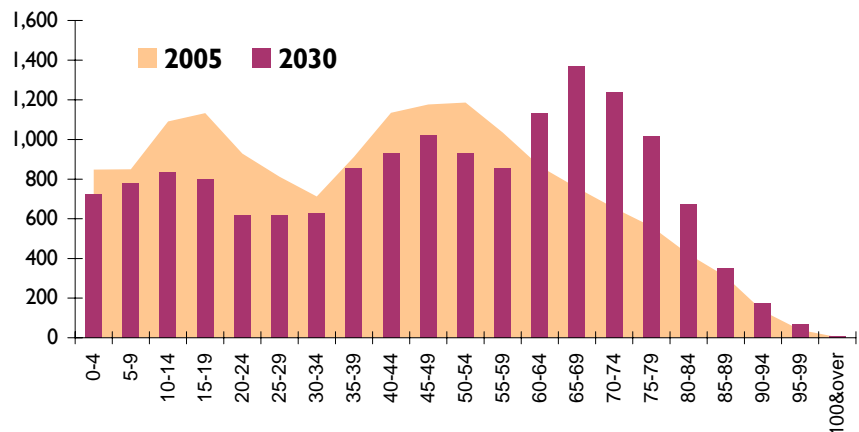
All this points to the overwhelming trend in the county of an older population that will out-number a younger population. Roughly one-quarter of the population is currently over 60 years old but by 2030 that share expands to nearly 40 percent. In contrast, 31 percent of the current population is under 25 years old and that shrinks to 24 percent by 2030. This trend is dramatized in the bottom graph where the 'hill' created by baby-boomers rises above all other age groups and continues to dwarf other ages in the next 25 years.

The impact of an aging population is perhaps more obvious in terms of services that they will require. But it also impacts the availability of labor, especially when lower fertility rates



Source: WI Dept. of Admin., Demographic Services and U. S. Census Bureau

Population by Age Groups in Rusk County



Source: WI Dept. of Administration, Demographic Services

Future Population and Labor Supply

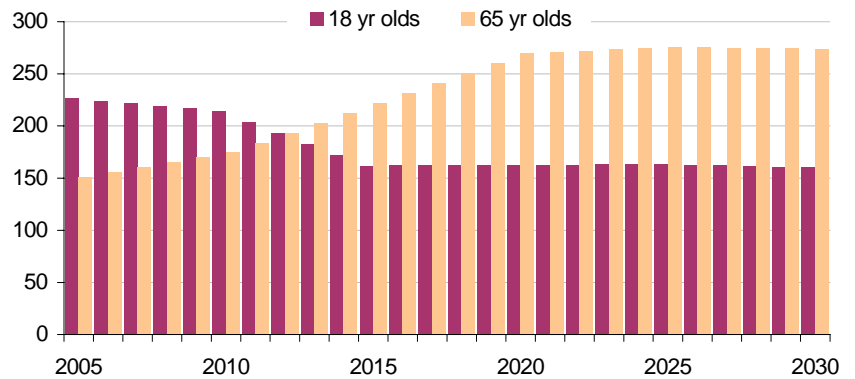
also means fewer young people. Assuming that 65 years old represents an average age of retirement and that 18 years old represents high school graduation then a plot of the number of these residents points to a time when one group exceeds the other in number. That convergence occurs in 2012 in Rusk County and there is little change in either age group beyond 2015.

As residents age, their participation in the labor force declines. Labor force participation rates (LFPR, see glossary) among the population 25 to 50 years of age are low in Rusk County but generally exceed 80 percent, compared with LFPR over 85 percent in the State of Wisconsin. But, after 55 years the LFPR begins to drop and by 60 years it is nearing 40 percent. The number of residents may increase but as the population ages the labor force will decline.

Although county population growth will slow it is not projected to decline during the projection period. However, because a greater share of the population will be over 50 years old, an age when labor force participation drops off, the size of the labor force is projected to decline. The three columns in the chart on the right illustrate labor force composition and size. Most notable is the increasingly larger sections representing workers over 65 years in the top sections and the smaller sections representing the younger age groups on the bottom.

This projection uses national assumptions that included a slight increase in the participation rates of older residents but did not

Convergence of 18 & 65 year old population in Rusk County

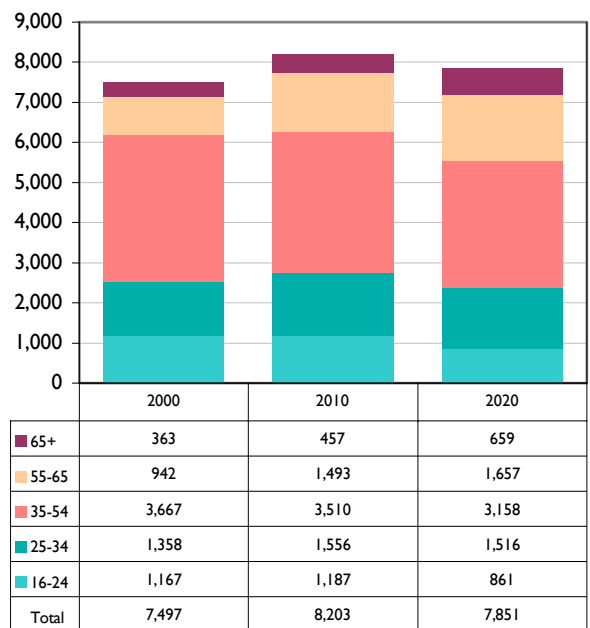


Source: WI Dept. of Administration, Demographic Services

factor in the declining participation rates of white residents; and, the population in Rusk County is 98 percent white. The largest ethnic group, American Indian, is less than one percent of the total population.

Two broad scenarios arise from the disparity in age and ethnicity: 1) there will be labor shortages due to retirements and the lack of replacement workers especially in occupations that rely on younger workers or require specialized skills; and 2) the aging population will impact the economy as the elderly demand changes in the types of goods and services provided in local communities.

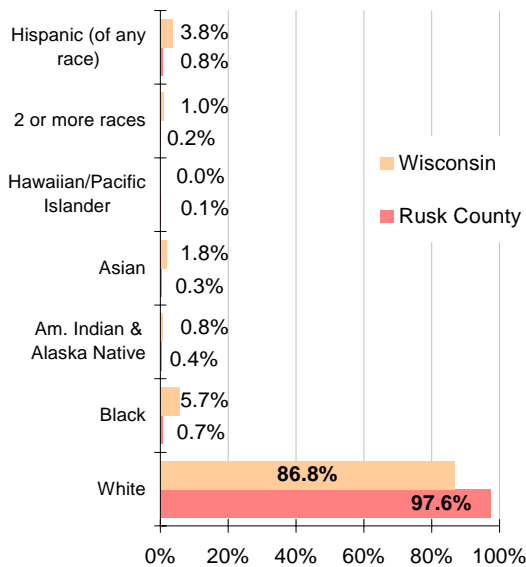
Rusk County Labor Force Projections by Age



Decade change	2.8%	9.4%	-4.3%
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Source: DWD, Office of Economic Advisors, August 2004

Race and ethnic distribution



Source: U.S. Census Population Characteristics Estimates, 2002

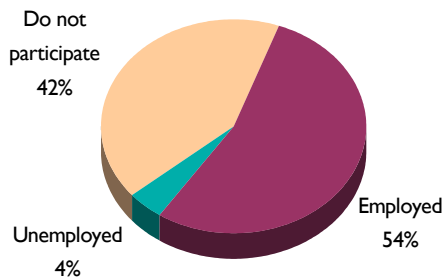
Current Labor Force

Labor force participation represents the share of population that is 16 years old and older that is either employed or unemployed. Participation rates in Wisconsin and the United States in 2003 were 72.9 and 66.3 percent, respectively.

In Rusk County the participation rate was 58.3 percent. That means that 42 percent of the population 16 years old and older did not participate. That includes some students and individuals who choose not to work including retirees. As the

fewer new entrants to the labor force during the last recession is one of the reasons unemployment rates remained as low as they did. The unemployment rate in Rusk County in 2003 was 7.5 percent compared to a 16.5 percent unemployment rate following the 1981-82 recession when the baby-boomers were entering the labor force in droves.

Labor force participation in Rusk County

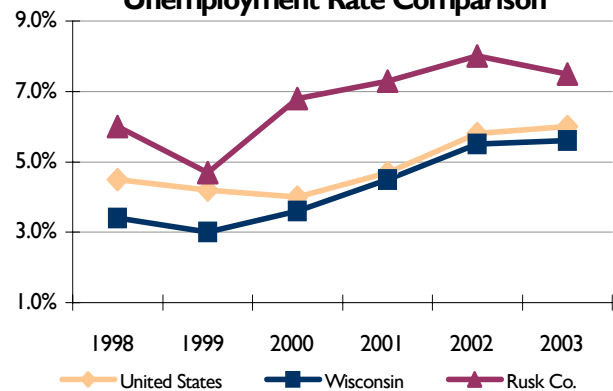


Source: DWD, Office of Economic Advisors, July 2004

population ages, more retirees will be included in the non-participating category by choosing not to work and the overall labor force participation rate will decline.

There will also be fewer new entrants to the labor force who are seeking first-time jobs and, consequently, fewer included among the unemployed. That, in turn, will produce lower unemployment rates. The fact that there were

Unemployment Rate Comparison



Rusk County Civilian Labor Force Data

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Labor Force	7,133	7,005	7,145	7,138	7,050	7,026
Employed	6,708	6,677	6,660	6,615	6,485	6,499
Unemployed	425	328	485	523	565	527
Unemployment Rate	6.0%	4.7%	6.8%	7.3%	8.0%	7.5%

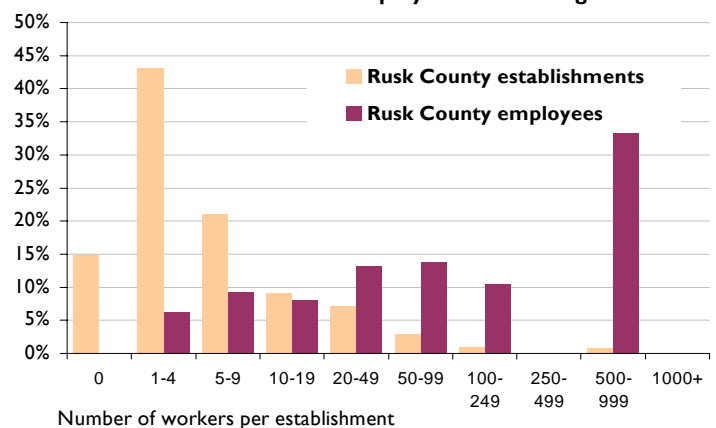
Source: WI DWD, Bur. of Workforce Information, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, 2003

Employers by Size

Nationwide, about one-quarter of the jobs are with employers that have 250 or more employees compared to roughly 31 percent in Wisconsin. However, of the roughly 5,790 jobs in Rusk County nearly 38 percent are with employers with 250 or more workers and, in this case, all of those employers have over 500 workers. In stark contrast, the share of employers with 250 or more workers comprises less than two percent of all employers in Rusk County compared with less than one percent in the nation and in Wisconsin.

The largest employers in the county provide the most jobs. However, the greatest share of employers, 43 percent, have less than five workers. The average employer in Rusk County has 15 employees, compared with 17 employees in Wisconsin and 13 in the United States.

Share of establishments & employees in size range in 2003



Source: DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, Table 221, July 2004

Industry & employers by size

Five of the largest employers in the county, including the two largest, are manufacturers that represent one of the four manufacturing industries included on the top industry list. The two largest, however, make wood products the largest industry in the county with nearly 1,180 jobs. In the last year wood products manufacturing employers added 101 jobs.

Three of the five school districts are on the largest employer

list and the educational services industry is third in providing jobs in the county. All of the educational institutions are now in the public sector since Mount Senario College closed.

Even though most of the employers in the food services and drinking places industry are small, the average number of workers is 12, together they provide nearly 240 jobs in the county.

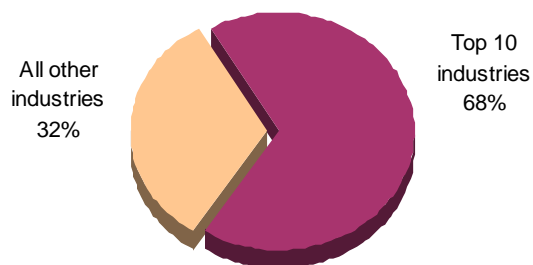
Top 10 Industries in Rusk County

Industry	March 2004		Numeric Employment Change	
	Establishments	Employees	2003-2004	1999-2004
Wood product manufacturing	7	1,178	101	-83
Executive, legislative, & gen government	29	655	-51	47
Educational services	5	524	-11	-223
Food & beverage stores	suppressed	suppressed	not avail.	not avail.
Food services & drinking places	19	237	-9	17
Printing & related support activities	suppressed	suppressed	not avail.	not avail.
Electrical equipment & appliances	suppressed	suppressed	not avail.	not avail.
Social assistance	10	212	-6	54
Furniture & related product mfg	3	139	10	-47
Membership organizations & associations	suppressed	suppressed	not avail.	not avail.

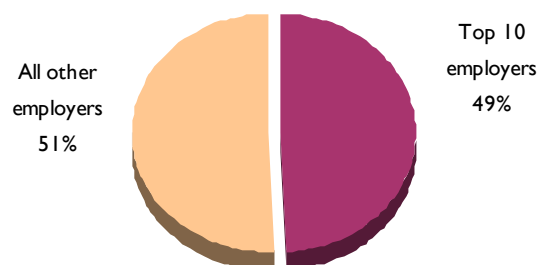
Top 10 Employers in Rusk County

Establishment	Product or Service	Size (Dec. 2003)
Weather Shield Mfg. Inc.	Wood window and door manufacturing	500-999 employees
Jeld-Wen Inc. (Norco Windows)	Wood window and door manufacturing	500-999 employees
County of Rusk	Executive, legislative, & gen. government offices	500-999 employees
Rockwell Automation Inc.	Relay and industrial control manufacturing	100-249 employees
Artisans Inc.	Commercial screen printing	100-249 employees
Ladysmith-Hawkins School District	Elementary and secondary schools	100-249 employees
Indianhead Community Action Agency	Social advocacy organizations	100-249 employees
School District of Flambeau	Elementary and secondary schools	100-249 employees
Bruce Public School	Elementary and secondary schools	100-249 employees
CDC Corp. (Conwed Designscape)	Custom architectural woodwork and millwork	50-99 employees

Share of jobs in top 10 industries in Rusk County



Share of Rusk County jobs with top 10 employers

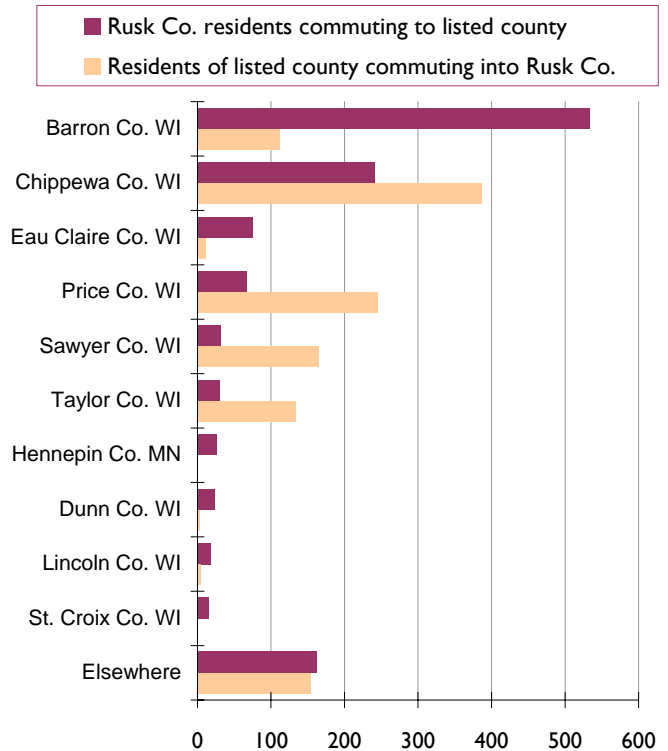


Commuting

In Rusk County, 1,230 residents, 18 percent of the workers who live in the county, traveled out of the county for a job. Two in every five workers who left the county headed for destinations in Barron County. Many were headed to employers in the City of Rice Lake, but the cities of Barron and Chetek were also popular destinations. Workers also choose employers in the City of Chippewa Falls and the City of Eau Claire as popular destinations.

The greatest number of workers that commute to jobs with Rusk County employers travel from the northeast corner of Chippewa County and are headed to the City of Ladysmith. The City of Ladysmith is the destination for nearly half of the workers that commute to Rusk County. The second most popular destination is the Village of Hawkins which is also the first choice for workers from Price County. Over half of the workers that commute to the county for jobs travel from either Chippewa or Price counties. Overall, approximately 1,220 workers travel to jobs with Rusk County employers. These workers are very important to local employers and increased from 755 in 1990.

Overall, the county attracts nearly as many workers as it loses. Residents who travel outside of the county for a job are included among the number of employed in the local labor force.



Source: U.S. Census 2000, Special tabulations: Worker Flow Files

Key occupations & wages

The jobs in Rusk County share some characteristics with neighboring counties and those similarities were used to define a labor supply area. This list includes wages for some of the occupations with the most employment in that area. It is significant because these 20 occupations provide approximately 15,900 jobs, or 32 percent of total employment, in the combined county area.

Each occupation includes a mean (average) and median (50th percentile) hourly wage probably the most frequently requested wage information. If the mean and median are relatively close the labor market for that occupation is probably tight.

Ten of the 20 occupations typically require only short-term training and, for the most part, have a mean hourly wage under \$11/hour. There are also jobs on this list that typically require only moderate to long-term training periods and have mean wages that range from \$11/hour to \$15.50/hour. Only two of the occupations typically require college degrees.

Occupation title	Hourly Wages			
	Mean	Percentile		
		25 th	50 th	75 th
Retail salespersons	\$10.75	\$7.15	\$9.25	\$12.93
Cashiers	\$7.44	\$6.26	\$7.23	\$8.36
Packers & packagers, hand	\$10.91	\$9.34	\$10.54	\$12.70
Truck drivers, heavy & tractor-trailer	\$15.44	\$12.38	\$14.83	\$18.36
Laborers & freight, stock, & material movers, hand	\$10.55	\$8.55	\$10.18	\$12.74
Bookkeeping, accounting, & auditing clerks	\$11.09	\$9.58	\$10.55	\$12.25
Team assemblers	\$11.54	\$9.35	\$11.62	\$14.08
Nursing aides, orderlies, & attendants	\$9.85	\$8.80	\$9.88	\$10.94
Janitors & cleaners, except maids & hskpg. cleaners	\$9.74	\$7.69	\$9.03	\$11.79
Elem. school teachers, except special ed.	-	-	-	-
Comb. food prep. & serving workers (fast food)	\$6.56	\$5.84	\$6.37	\$6.94
Office clerks, general	\$10.00	\$7.94	\$10.06	\$11.95
Teacher assistants	-	-	-	-
Stock clerks & order fillers	\$8.94	\$6.97	\$8.67	\$10.40
Production workers, all other	\$13.47	\$10.19	\$13.65	\$16.32
1st-line supvsr/mgrs. of prod. & operating workers	\$19.67	\$14.70	\$19.22	\$23.21
Helpers--production workers	\$12.66	\$10.76	\$12.35	\$13.93
Registered nurses	\$21.87	\$18.93	\$21.19	\$24.94
Maintenance & repair workers, general	\$15.01	\$12.50	\$15.07	\$17.35
Secretaries, except legal, medical, & executive	\$11.17	\$9.63	\$10.96	\$12.74

Rusk County is part of an area which includes Barron, Burnett, Clark, Rusk and Taylor counties.

Source: DWD, Office of Economic Advisors, special tabulation using EDS and OES 2003

Employment and Wages

The number of jobs with local employers declined 2.2 percent in Rusk County from 2002 to 2003 compared with the change in Wisconsin of -0.2 percent. Overall, employers reduced payroll by 129 jobs but the greatest reduction occurred in natural resources and mining where employment in 2002 spiked for non-economic reasons (a construction firm was miscoded in 2002). This also explains the change in wages in 2003.

Employers in manufacturing, however, did lose roughly 60 jobs in 2003. In spite of the jobs losses in manufacturing it remains the largest source of jobs in the county and workers earn the second highest annual wage of \$29,663.

However, manufacturing wages in Rusk County are only 71 percent of wages for similar work statewide.

The largest increase in jobs in 2003 occurred with employers that provide other services, like auto and electronic repair and hair salons, in the county. The average annual wage for workers exceed similar wages statewide although only three percent of the jobs in the county are in other services.

This distribution of total payroll and employment for the major industry groups in Rusk County is illustrated in the below graph and reflects the dominance of manufacturing. The over-

Average Annual Wage by Industry Division in 2003

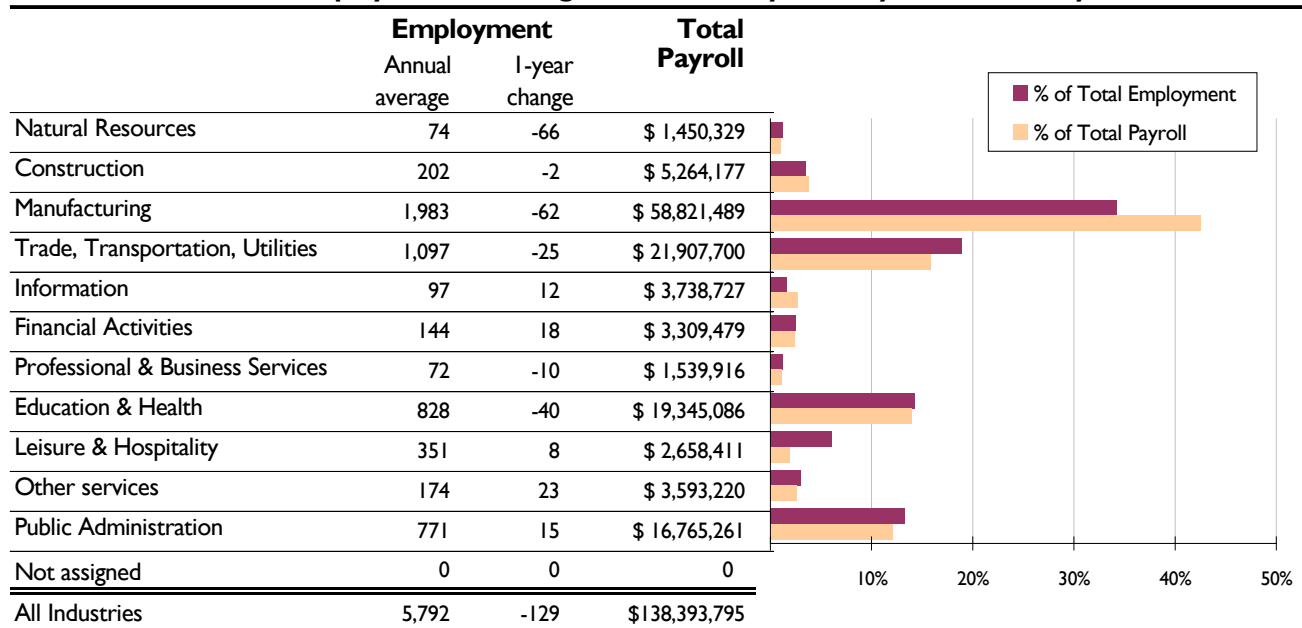
	Average Annual Wage		Percent of	1-year
	Wisconsin	Rusk County	Wisconsin	% change
All Industries	\$ 33,423	\$ 23,894	71.5%	1.9%
Natural resources	\$ 25,723	\$ 19,599	76.2%	-47.5%
Construction	\$ 40,228	\$ 26,060	64.8%	3.1%
Manufacturing	\$ 42,013	\$ 29,663	70.6%	7.6%
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	\$ 28,896	\$ 19,971	69.1%	5.3%
Information	\$ 39,175	\$ 38,544	98.4%	-3.8%
Financial activities	\$ 42,946	\$ 22,982	53.5%	1.0%
Professional & Business Services	\$ 38,076	\$ 21,388	56.2%	9.6%
Education & Health	\$ 35,045	\$ 23,364	66.7%	-4.0%
Leisure & Hospitality	\$ 12,002	\$ 7,574	63.1%	-0.1%
Other services	\$ 19,710	\$ 20,651	104.8%	-4.8%
Public Administration	\$ 35,689	\$ 21,745	60.9%	3.1%

Source: WI DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages

all annual average of \$23,894 in 2003 increased 1.9 percent from 2002 but was only 71.5 percent of the average wage paid to workers in the State of Wisconsin.

Several factors influence average wages in industries including occupation composition (professional and technical jobs generally have higher wages than clerical and service occupations), job tenure (those with more seniority are paid more than new hires), average workweek (full or part-time), and seasonal and temporary employment.

2003 Employment and Wage Distribution by Industry in Rusk County



Source: WI DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, Quarterly Census Employment and Wages, June 2004

Per Capita Personal Income

Per capita personal income (see glossary) increased 1.8 percent in Rusk County in 2002, slower than in the United States, Wisconsin and other non-metropolitan counties in the state. The PCPI in the county is only 69 percent of PCPI in Wisconsin and 68 percent of the United States and ranks 71st out of 72 counties in the Wisconsin.

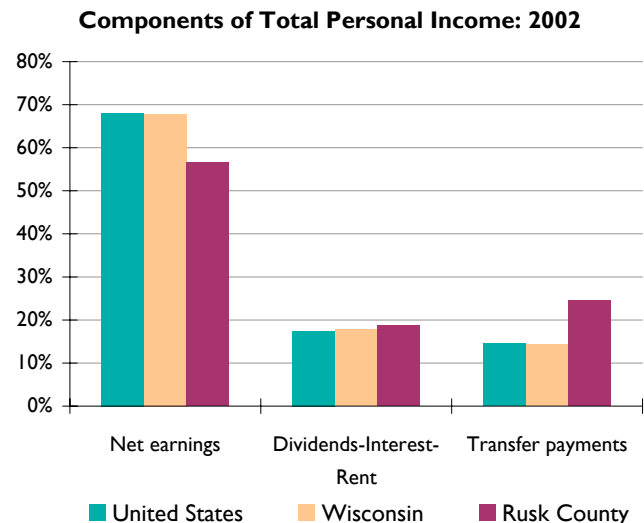
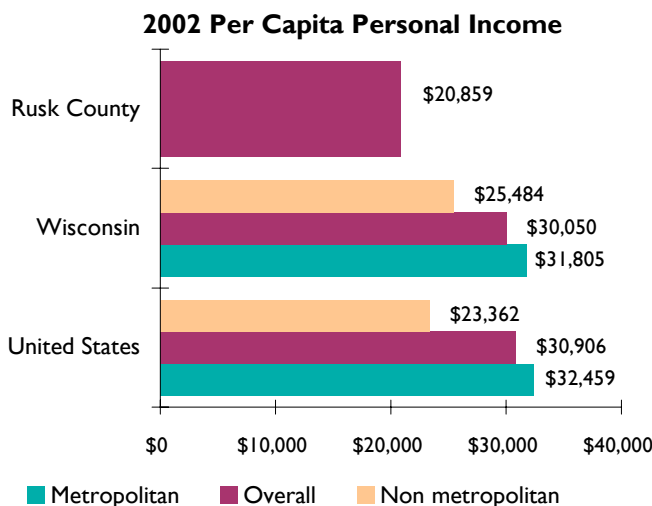
The greatest share of total personal income is net earnings from jobs, both in and out of the county, self-employment and proprietorships. Not only are annual average wages considerably lower than in Wisconsin but the share of total personal income from net earnings of 57 percent in Rusk County is

well below the 68 percent of both the state and nation. In contrast transfer payments comprise a much larger share, 25 percent compared with 14 percent in the state and nation. Roughly 79 percent of transfer payments are retirement benefits and government paid medical reimbursements.

While PCPI is often used as a comparative income measure it should be remembered that population is also a key component. PCPI is the result of dividing total income by total population. Residents over 18 years old earn most income but the younger population is still included in the formula. Likewise, a retired population has a much lower earning capacity.

	Per Capita Personal Income						Percent Change	
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	1 year	5 year
United States	\$25,334	\$26,883	\$27,939	\$29,847	\$30,527	\$30,906	1.2%	22.0%
Wisconsin	\$24,514	\$26,175	\$27,135	\$28,573	\$29,361	\$30,050	2.3%	22.6%
Non-metropolitan WI	\$20,734	\$22,195	\$22,900	\$24,059	\$24,833	\$25,484	2.6%	22.9%
Rusk County	\$16,078	\$17,944	\$18,629	\$19,334	\$20,485	\$20,859	1.8%	29.7%
In current dollars (adjusted to U.S. CPI-U)								
United States	\$28,397	\$29,670	\$30,170	\$31,181	\$31,010	\$30,906	-0.3%	8.8%
Wisconsin	\$27,478	\$28,889	\$29,301	\$29,850	\$29,825	\$30,050	0.8%	9.4%
Non-metropolitan WI	\$23,240	\$24,497	\$24,728	\$25,135	\$25,226	\$25,484	1.0%	9.7%
Rusk County	\$18,022	\$19,804	\$20,117	\$20,199	\$20,808	\$20,859	0.2%	15.7%

Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, May 2004



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System, May 2004

The county workforce profiles are produced annually by the Office of Economic Advisors in the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development. The author of this profile and regional contact for additional labor market information is:

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Hayward, WI 54843
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email: Beverly.Gehrke@dwd.state.wi.us

Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) - A single county or group of counties that include at least one urbanized area with a minimum population of 50,000. Multiple-county MSAs have a central county or counties, which have a high degree of social and economic integration with the other member counties as measured by commuting data.

Non-metropolitan county - Any county that is not a member of a metropolitan statistical area.

Net Migration - One of two components of population change. It is the net result of individuals who either moved into or out of an area.

Natural Change - One of two components of population change. It is the result of the number of births minus the number of deaths in an area over a period of time. A natural increase indicates there were more births than deaths. A natural decrease indicates there were more deaths than births.

Fertility rate - Number of live births per 1,000 women aged 15-44 years.

Employed - Persons 16 years of age or older, who worked as paid employees, or worked in their own business, profession or farm, or worked 15 hours or more as unpaid workers in a family-operated enterprise. Includes those temporarily absent from their jobs due to illness, bad weather, vacation, childcare problems, labor dispute, maternity or paternity leave, or other family or personal obligations.

Unemployed - Persons 16 years of age or older with no employment, who were available for work and made efforts to find employment sometime during the previous 4-week period ending with the monthly reference week. Persons who were awaiting recall to a job did not need to look for work to be classified as unemployed.

Labor Force - The sum of the employed and unemployed, whom are at least 16 years of age and older.

Unemployment Rate - The number of unemployed divided by the labor force. It is expressed as a percentage of the labor force.

Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) - The labor force divided by the total population aged 16 years and older. It is expressed as a percentage of the population aged 16 years and older.

Suppressed - Data is withheld or suppressed if it does not meet certain criteria. If an industry in a county has fewer than three employers or if a single employer employs 80% or more that industry's total employment in that county then the data are suppressed. These criteria were established to maintain the confidential reporting of payroll and employment by employers.

Total Personal Income - The aggregate income of an area received by all persons from all sources. It is calculated as the sum of wage and salary disbursements (less contributions for government social insurance), supplements to wages and salaries, proprietors' income with inventory valuation and capital consumption adjustments, rental income of persons with capital consumption adjustment, personal dividend income, personal interest income, and personal current transfer receipts that include retirement and veteran's benefits, government paid medical reimbursements, and income maintenance program payments.

Per Capita Personal Income (PCPI) - Total personal income divided by the total population.

Current Dollars - Phrase used to express historical dollar values in terms of their current purchasing power via inflation adjustment.

CPI-U - Consumer Price Index for all urban consumers, the most commonly used measure of inflation in the United States.